

TO: Vermont Health Care Providers, Hospitals, and Ambulatory Care Centers

FROM: Patsy Kelso, State Epidemiologist for Infectious Diseases

Respiratory Illness Due to Enterovirus (EV-D68)

An uncommon form of enterovirus (EV-D68) has been identified in six states among children hospitalized with severe acute respiratory illness. Among the 30 children hospitalized in the first two reported outbreaks, all had difficulty breathing. Fewer than 25 percent were febrile, and 70 percent had a history of wheezing or asthma.

Action Steps for Physicians:

- Be aware of EV-D68 as a potential cause of clusters of severe respiratory illness, particularly in young children.
- Work with parents of children with asthma to ensure optimal asthma control.
- Report children admitted to the hospital with severe unexplained acute respiratory distress to the Vermont Department of Health. The Health Department will work with the institution to facilitate laboratory testing, as appropriate. Nasal pharyngeal and oral pharyngeal swabs have had high-yield for enterovirus in the Midwest U.S. experience.
- While Standard and Contact Precautions are utilized with known enterovirus infections, Droplet Precautions are prudent for use with children admitted to the hospital with severe acute respiratory illness.
- Promote influenza vaccine to help decrease this predictable source of serious illness.

Key Information about EV-D68:

Symptoms: EV-D68 has been reported to cause mild to severe respiratory illness. The full spectrum of EV-D68 illness is not well defined.

Treatment: There are no available vaccines or specific treatments for EV-D68 infections, and clinical care is supportive.

Transmission and Prevention: The virus can be found in respiratory secretions and is likely spread from person to person.

Testing: The Health Department will arrange testing on a case-by-case basis for children hospitalized with acute respiratory illness of unknown origin. Testing for EV-D68 is not readily available, but the Health Department Laboratory can arrange testing at CDC.

For more information: Contact the Health Department's Epidemiology Unit 24/7 at 802-863-7240 or go to <http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/enterovirus/ev68.aspx>

HAN Message Type Definitions

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Info Service Message: Provides general correspondence from VDH, which is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.